

Habits, Nest and Eggs. Alexander (1898: 106) described *razae* as being found in flocks feeding sometimes on grass seed, sometimes among rocks, while Meinertzhagen found that it made good use of its long bill for excavating grubs. Alexander noted "on taking to flight they utter notes very similar to our Skylark when on the wing," and remarked on the males raising their crests. On a subsequent visit he described (1898: 282) the males courtship, "with wings drooping and scraping along the ground, a male would approach and circumvent a female, and then rise above her head and pour out his song as he ascended vertically with a gentle beat of wings, and not in the spiral circles that characterize the impetuous singing flight of our Skylark". The nest he found was a frail structure of grass placed in a small depression in the loose stony soil in a patch of grass or under a boulder. The eggs, three in number, resembled those of the Wood Lark (*Lullula arborea*) in colour and dimensions.

Conclusions. In structural characters *razae* appears to be closest to *Alauda*, though exhibiting some affinities with *Galerida* which suggest that these genera are closely related. The differences between *razae* and the European Sky Lark (smaller size, less pointed wing and longer bill) may all be attributed to adaption for life on a small island. In field habits, nest and eggs, there are many similarities with *Alauda* and the chief difference noted, that of less elaborate song flight, may also be an adaption to conditions on a small island.

I believe therefore that the Raza Island Lark is closely related to the Sky Larks and henceforth should be known as *Alauda razae*.

Acknowledgements. I am grateful to both Derek Goodwin and Colin Harrison for examining these larks with me and discussing their affinities.

References:

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Cisticola galactotes in Southern and Central Africa

by MRS. B. P. HALL

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After his tour of the southern Congo, Lynes (1939: 90) described the variation in *Cisticola galactotes* in southern and central Africa as it was then known, and discussed the nomenclatorial problems presented, later (p. 129) adding corrections to his first conclusions. His final views can be summarized as follows:

(a) Birds from Bechuanaland (Ngamiland) and southern Mozambique were best placed with nominate *C. g. galactotes* from Natal, a subspecies known in the type locality to lay plain red eggs.

(b) Birds in fresh breeding dress from Lake Bangweolo were exceptionally bright rufous on the head, and laid plain red eggs. These represent toptypical *luapula*. There were no specimens in worn or non-breeding dress.

(c) A series of birds from Katanga, the Luapula valley and Lake Moero were considerably less rich in breeding dress than those from Bangweolo, and laid spotted eggs. He first judged them to be closest to *C. g. suahelica*

from Tanganyika (a rather dull race), but later (p. 129) altered his opinion, and called them *C. g. luapula* in spite of the difference already described in breeding dress or in colour of eggs.

(d) Birds from Lower Zambesi and Shire valleys, also known to lay spotted eggs, were judged close to *suaelica*.

Subsequent collecting, particularly in western Northern Rhodesia and Ngamiland, has complicated rather than clarified the picture, and authors have differed in their treatment of the species. White (1962: 667) in the latest review regards all birds from Katanga southwards through the Rhodesias and Portuguese East Africa as nominate *galactotes*, except for a population in the Balovale area and Barotseland, in western Northern Rhodesia, which he had previously named *schoutedeni* (White, 1954: 106). These birds he found to be rather larger than *C. g. galactotes*, and, in breeding dress, darker above with a darker red-brown crown and heavier streaking on the back; below rather whiter, less buffy. The non-breeding dress unknown.

Through the kindness of R. H. N. Smithers, M. P. Stuart-Irwin, M. A. Traylor and Professor H. Schouteden, I have been able to examine the entire series of *C. galactotes* from the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, most of the extensive series collected by Traylor in Barotseland and Ngamiland for the Chicago Natural History Museum and critical specimens in the collection at Tervuren. These with the British Museum collection amount to over one hundred birds from the critical areas. Nevertheless there still remain most unfortunate gaps in our knowledge of the various plumages. Since there is some hope that some of these gaps can be filled in the near future I propose to leave the nomenclature indecisive, and will discuss the material by populations rather than subspecies.

1. *Natal and Zululand*. A small series representing nominate *C. galactotes* is distinguished from all others by a longer bill (♂ 17–18, ♀ 16 against ♂♀ 14–16 mm. elsewhere), and possibly a longer tail in winter (see Table). In breeding dress the crown appears rather duller and less red than Ngami and Northern Rhodesian birds that have been ascribed to *galactotes*. These differences and the distance separating Ngamiland from Natal makes me hesitant to regard any of these populations as true *C. g. galactotes* except those from Natal and Zululand.

2. *Southern Portuguese East Africa*. A single male in non-breeding dress from Inhambane has a long bill (17 mm.) similar to *C. g. galactotes* but a shorter wing and tail, and is rather less rich in colour. It may represent an intermediate population. Further material is required.

3. *Sabi-Lundi Junction*. Only two specimens are available from Southern Rhodesia, a male and female in non-breeding dress. They appear paler than *C. g. galactotes* and lack either the long bill or the long tail. Further material is required.

4. *Lower Zambesi valley and central Portuguese East Africa*. A male and female in breeding dress collected recently from near Tambara, and two from Beira (in moult) support Lynes' original view that this population is closest to the greyer-headed *suaelica* but more material is required.

5. *Chobe, Caprivi Strip and Livingstone area*. Birds in both breeding and non-breeding dress are available. These show the slight differences from *C. g. galactotes* already noted. The eggs are unknown.

6. *Ngamiland*. A good series is now available in breeding dress, which matches the Chobe series, though one male from Shorobe, 25 miles north of Maun, has an exceptionally long tail (56 mm.) for the season. A single non-breeding male seems similar to those from the Chobe but more material is required. The eggs are unknown.

7. *Kafue area*. A series in non-breeding dress matches the Chobe birds but further specimens in breeding dress are required. The eggs also are unknown. It seems probable that there is no significant difference between these last three groups (5-7): they may possibly prove to require a new name or may be close enough to Bangweolo birds to be included under *C. g. luapula* (see below).

8. *Balovale area and western Barotseland*. The majority of birds from these areas are in breeding dress but a few non-breeding birds show that in both plumages these populations are duller on the head and darker on the back than Kafue/Chobe/Ngami birds. They average slightly larger. Traylor collected a clutch of eggs in the Kalabo district (see Benson & Pitman 1963: 35) which are spotted, typical of those of *C. g. suahelica*. These populations represent *C. g. schoutedeni*.

9. *Lake Bangweolo*. Since Lynes pointed out that the small series in fresh breeding dress from Bangweolo had exceptionally bright rufous heads (darker than "*galactotes*", brighter than *schoutedeni*) very little further material has been obtained. The only two additional specimens examined are in very worn breeding dress just commencing moult on the head. It is not therefore yet possible to judge the extent of variation in this population, which represents toptotypical *luapula*, or to assess its relationship with the Ngami/Chobe/Kafue birds.

10. *Katanga, Lake Moero and Luapula valley*. Little additional material is available from these areas and does not include any specimens in really fresh breeding dress. In both slightly worn breeding dress and in non-breeding dress these birds have duller, less rufous heads than comparable specimens from Ngamiland, Chobe and Kafue (and much duller heads than the fresh Bangweolo birds) and the edges of the mantle feathers are darker, contrasting less heavily with the centres thus giving a less streaked appearance, particularly in breeding dress. In appearance, as Lynes first noted, they are very like *suahelica* and quite unlike typical *luapula*. When he altered his opinion later and called these populations *C. g. luapula* he did not define what differences re-examination revealed between them and *suahelica*, though the fact that he included them with Bangweolo birds implies that he believed that they must have bright rufous heads in fresh breeding dress, improbable as this seems from the series available.

Conclusions

1. On present evidence it is not possible to name subspecifically the populations of *C. galactotes* in (a) Southern Rhodesia and southern Portuguese East Africa, (b) Zambesi valley (c) Ngamiland, the Chobe and Kafue areas, (d) the Luapula valley, Lake Moero and Katanga.

2. A good series of toptotypical *luapula* from Lake Bangweolo is urgently required to determine whether either the Ngami/Chobe/Kafue populations, or the Luapula valley/Lake Moero/Katanga populations can be ascribed to *luapula*.

3. Good series taken throughout the year are required from Southern Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa.

TABLE OF WING AND TAIL LENGTHS (in mm.)

The number of specimens measured shown in brackets. Discrepancy in comparative numbers of wings and tails is due to moult.

Population and Race (numbers as in text)	WING		TAIL			
	♂	♀	♂		♀	
			br.	n.br.	br.	n.br.
<i>C. galactotes</i>						
1. <i>C. g. galactotes</i>	62-64 (8)	55-56 (4)	52-55 (4)	65-70 (3)	47-49 (2)	55-58 (2)
2. near <i>galactotes</i>	60			54		
3. subsp. ?	61	55		59		51
4. near <i>suaelica</i>	58-60 (3)	51-54 (4)	48-50 (2)		46 (1)	41-46 (3)
5. near <i>luapula</i> ?	58-63 (12)	53-58 (8)	49-53 (7)	56-60 (5)	46-48 (2)	51-53 (4)
6. near <i>luapula</i> ?	59-65 (8)	53-55 (5)	47-52 (once 56) (6)	55 (1)	48-59 (2)	51 (1)
7. near <i>luapula</i> ?	58-62 (4)	53-58 (6)	52 (1)	59-62 (3)	48 (1)	50-53 (3)
8. <i>C. g. schoutedeni</i>	63-68 (19)	57-61 (6)	50-58 (13)	60-67 (4)	54 (2)	52-57 (4)
9. <i>C. g. luapula</i>	59-66 (8)	54-56 (3)	50-55 (4)		46-47 (2)	
10. near <i>suaelica</i>	59-64 (12)	53-56 (11)	45-50 (6)	53-57 (5)	41-46 (6)	48-51 (3)

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A new subspecies of Yellow Canary *Serinus flaviventris*

by J. M. WINTERBOTTOM

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When I reviewed the races of the Yellow Canary *Serinus flaviventris* (Swainson) (Winterbottom, 1959), I defined the range of the typical subspecies as: "The coastal strip from Oranjemund, just north of the mouth of the Orange River, to Still Bay, Riversdale District." It has now become necessary to revise this range at both ends.

Re-examination of seven birds from Still Bay (3♂, 4♀) shows that they belong to the karoo form, *S. f. quintoni* Winterbottom 1959. Why this